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THOUGHTS

ON THE

DUTY of a good CITIZEN,

With regard to

WAR and INVASION;

IN A

LETTER

FROM A

CITIZEN

TO HIS

FRIEND.

L O N D O N :

Printed by J. WAUGH, and W. FENNER, in
Lombard-Street.

RECEIVED

ON THE

10th day of

1877

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THE



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TO HIS

M. R. I. B. D.

LONDON

Printed by J. W. & W. L. ...

THOUGHTS

On the DUTY of a
GOOD CITIZEN, &c.

London, March 3. 1756.

S I R,

I Do not pretend to be a better politician than my neighbors, but it seems as if I had GUESSED right. It is now FIVE YEARS since I have been possessed of an opinion, that a war would soon break out, between us and FRANCE. My observation that

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the last war was not decisive, joined to some circumstances which happened to fall within the compass of my own knowledge, made me conclude, that this great event would happen before many years were elapsed. Indeed, I did not think the political system would be so much, and so speedily changed from the last war; but, may we not now conclude, that a NEW SCENE will be disclosed? And shall we not prepare for NEW events?

As the objects in contest are of the greatest importance, the struggle, I imagine, will be arduous; though, perhaps, less expensive and bloody than a Flemish war.

I have lately read Voltaire's history of 1741, in which I find that the

the FRENCH, at the commencement of the late war, embarked fifteen battalions, with a view to invade this island. The attempt failed, as I trust such attempts ever will : but, if they thought the enterprize practicable at that time, when they had ANOTHER GAME to play, will they not be obliged, in some measure, to TRY THEIR FORTUNE now ? The design was then frustrated by the force of the winds, even in their harbors ; though what Mr Voltaire says, implies their being actually failed : therefore I conclude, they will choose a Milder season ; and, as we are now better prepared, they will collect a GREATER force, if they are hardy enough to make any other attempt.

The FRENCH are powerful by their armies in EUROPE ; ours cannot be so

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numerous. In AMERICA we greatly exceed them in numbers; and it is very difficult for them to convey a great army thither. Our fleets are now most powerful; and, I hope, will increase much more than theirs. In the common course of things, if it please heaven, we must succeed. If the FRENCH make war on the water, as they did on the late occasion, will they not, probably, be cut off by detail? If they make a vigorous effort, have they not a CHANCE OF BEATING our fleets, or of LANDING their men, or BOTH? They are exasperated. They are an active, enterprizing people. They know the valor of our seamen and troops; but, excepting these, this country may appear to them as defenceless, as it is plentiful; and the inhabitants as timid, as they are rich:

and

and it is not so much what we REAL-
LY ARE, as what they THINK, so far
as regards their MEASURES. Without
saying more, what are we to expect?

War is the madness of nations; and,
like some other kinds of frenzy, it is
incurable by any human art. Astro-
nomers calculate the return of comets,
and portend that they will one day
set the world in a blaze. Wars are
not so periodical as to be exactly cal-
culated, and differ from comets, in as
much as they NEVER come without
destroying some part of the fairest
works of Creation. But WE did not
seek this war; witness the spirit of
the FRENCH, in the east, ever since
the peace: witness their delusive
conduct with regard to the neu-
tral Islands; their secret practices,
and more open violations of friend-
ship,

ship, towards our new settlement at HALLIFAX; their hostile behavior on the OHIO; and, their grand equipment last year, in support of those hostilities. May we not piously call HEAVEN to witness, that WE did not seek this war, though we wisely attempted to frustrate those designs, which a less degree of attention might have rendered very fatal to us.

What gives me the highest hopes that heaven has mercy in store for us, is, that we do not affect conquest. Every one must see clearly, how willing the King was to spend the remainder of his days in peace. His Majesty certainly had no thoughts of disturbing the repose of his people: It seems improbable that this nation will ever make war, unless we are compelled to it, either for the preservation

tion of the true and lawful possessions of this crown; for mere self-defence; or, what is the same, for the protection of our trade. And I declare to you, that notwithstanding the iniquities of this nation are great, I believe, if we exert ourselves, the almighty will favor our cause, on this single account. You do not doubt there is a God, nor that he governs mankind, though he does not control their WILLs : and can it be pleasing to a Being of INFINITE mercy, to behold men departing from their humanity, by destroying each other, as if they had NO MERCY ? But such is the unhappy state of the world, with regard to war, and we must make the best of it we can.

It will appear to every dispassionate lover of his country, what the

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motives

motives to the war really are: and that, from the very beginning of this affair, we had no other alternative; either war, or an unsafe, if not an inglorious peace. And shall we now expect miracles will be wrought for our preservation? We must PREPARE: if we do not use ALL the means that providence has put into our hands, which we can CONSISTENTLY use; if we leave any of them neglected, or unprepared, how shall we answer for the consequences? We have a formidable fleet, with a great body of land-forces and marines. We are also told, that a considerable auxiliary body of foreigners is to be landed in this island. In our present circumstances, will not every considerate person call this, likewise, a very prudent and wise measure?

You

You may be well assured, that our regiments are compleating, very expeditiously, by means of the loyalty and zeal of many noblemen and gentlemen, who are gone into the country for that purpose.

Thus many of us citizens, without any more to do, think ourselves ENTIRELY SECURE, hardly bestowing a thought on the POWER which may come AGAINST us.

Whether it is that I am more THOUGHTFUL, or TIMOROUS, than some of my neighbors; but I confess, I cannot help being sorry when I hear people talk of INVASION as an almost IMPOSSIBLE EVENT. It is the fault of this nation to contemn their enemies too much; and we seldom BELIEVE any thing that is dis-

agreeable. Thus flattering ourselves into an opinion that such an event as invasion cannot happen, we may neglect some of the means, which may be in our power, of rendering it ineffectual if it does.

Thank God, we shall have a brave army ! but would any one, in the shape of a man, patiently behold an enemy ravage these fertile fields, if the fortune of war should bring such enemy into the heart of this country ? Will not every good subject, consider himself as a soldier, unless he means to submit, and receive a conqueror ? We ought, as reasonable beings, to resolve upon one, or the other. I will not allow myself to think, as the case now stands, that any circumstance can happen, to induce us to submit. We ought to think

think of victory only; but we must, for that very reason, prepare in every shape for the encounter: for if we entertain this opinion WITHOUT preparing, we are not therefore safe: let us then prepare, not our spirits only, but our arms also.

Would we intimidate our foes from the attempt, or be the more enabled to repel it, we ought to rouse a martial spirit, not talk of the impossibility of the thing. In this we shall, in our private capacities, imitate those, who are at the helm of the state; that is, to make no NOISE, but PREPARE: to be calm and easy, though DETERMINED, to stand our ground bravely, if the trial should come. The nearer it approaches, the more seriously we shall think: for indeed, the FRENCH seem to me more powerful

powerful, than has been generally imagined.

For my own part, I love PEACE. The thought of war warms me less than it did seventeen years ago. I do not delight in blood, nor in the smell of gun powder. But these are SECONDARY considerations: I am not the less impelled, by the love I bear to my country, to prepare for that which, I think, every man in my circumstances ought to prepare for; I mean, to do the best I can in the way which shall be thought most conducive to the safety and happiness of my country, though I know not at present what that may be.

I see nothing strange, nor yet very highly improbable, that FRANCE may debark men in some place or other of this island, before we are many months

months older. And should it so happen, to prepare a great number of armed men, as recruits, must be PROPER, as they may be absolutely necessary. The service of volunteers may also be acceptable, either as a double guard to the sacred person of the king ; to preserve order in these cities ; to guard a pass, with a view to set regular forces at liberty for remoter service ; or, peradventure, to join and mix with a regular army. And were it only to incorporate with the hired MILITIA OF LONDON, it is a strong motive to be in READINESS. Antient law and custom preserves this militia as a guard : the importance of the object distinguishes it from all the rest of the kingdom : and might not such VOLUNTEERS, if ready for an emergency, raise an emu-

emulation in these mercenaries, and encourage them to be of real use?

By Sir William Pettit's calculation we have two hundred thousand men fit to bear arms, in the cities of LONDON and WESTMINSTER; but supposing them to be full ONE hundred thousand fighting men, ought we not to calculate upon at least sixty thousand of them? I apprehend these can be EASILY collected, and what a FORMIDABLE succour they might be.

We must not call them a militia, unless the legislature consents, but a number of men ready to bear arms for the service of the state. Our footmen alone would be sufficient, and most of these are the strong-

strongest and most active men in the kingdom. — The simple, and 'faith friend, I think, the NECESSARY question is, "JOHN, will you fight with
 "me, or for me, in case the safety of
 "our country, dear to you as well
 "as me, should require it?" The servant who should answer, No: should be no servant for me.

If a man determines in his own breast what part he shall act, he ought from that moment to prepare the necessaries for defence, COURAGE and ARMS. But will those who are disposed to hazard their lives in defence of what is dear to them, be of real service without arms, or without learning the use of them? The grand point, indeed, is to submit to discipline, and to stand fire; and one would imagine a few flashes of gun-
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powder in the face, with a competent share of courage, would produce the effect desired.

Those who mean to fight upon an emergency, were it only to defend the capital, ought, at least, to BE READY; they ought to be prepared to send in their names, and place of abode: and declare what discipline they will comply with: and if they will appear on horse-back, or on foot, and with what arms.

I was abroad during the last war; but I am told that gentlemen and lawyers distinguished themselves by their ready appearance in arms, whilst the rebellion lasted. Merchants also shewed the same spirit. Tradesmen and mechanics were likewise fired with resentment of that unnatural rebellion: and I presume none of them

them have quite forgotten their EX-
ERCISE.

I am glad to hear that some young gentlemen who were not instructed at that time, are preparing themselves now; they cannot be the worse for it, since from the very nature of things, the man who supposes it may be necessary for him to bear arms, and fight for what is dear to him, and is ready to do it, must enjoy a much higher satisfaction of mind, than he who, from ignorance or cowardice, neither thinks of danger, nor is in any capacity to lend any assistance whatever, if it comes.

Let us remember JOHNSON; who can tell what will happen? We have a more valuable object to fight for than the AMERICANS. We seem

to be UNITED, and have at least as MARTIAL spirits. It is far from an IMPOSSIBLE event, that we may be called upon for succours of some kind or other, though it should not be for such INVALIDS as you and I are, to take arms ourselves; and he must be a fool, who is taken at a disadvantage, in any thing of IMPORTANCE which he INTENDS to do, under certain circumstances, though the GREATER probability should be on the side of it's not happening.

The better capacity we are in to defend ourselves at home, the more force we can spare to secure his Majesty's AMERICAN dominions, which is the next object. The greater our preparations, the more we shall be enabled to treat the designs of the FRENCH with contempt,
that

that they may not, by pretending to make an invasion here, find the means of distressing us in AMERICA; nor yet by making a FEINT, as if AMERICA was their only object, do us any great harm at HOME; even if it should please heaven that our ships should miss them, or be taken at a disadvantage.

But you must not be surprized to hear that people talk extravagantly upon the subject of invasion. That there are many and great difficulties in such an enterprize, can be doubted by no person of the least discernment: but if, on the other hand, we consider the dangers which always attend on war, and what desperate exploits sometimes become necessary, it is amazing that men of great knowledge of the world, and even people of great

great skill in maritime affairs, should treat this business with so much indifference. I am willing enough to give their ridicule its proper effect: if the thing is really very remote, and uncertain, it can be of no great moment, whether those who talk upon the subject, have consistent notions of it, or not. But when, from the situation of affairs, there is just ground to believe, that an attempt will be made, no good consequences can attend the false apprehensions of such persons as should teach others how to think and to behave.

I have said, that supposing a war really ensues, if we look back to its beginnings, we shall think it was unavoidable, either upon the principle of safety, or good policy: yet if
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an accommodation takes place, which is S A F E, and S U C H I have no conception will take place, we may conclude, that both nations, after having been most apparently reluctant, either to shed the blood of their subjects, or to exhaust their treasure, are much wiser than could be imagined.

In the calm view in which I now see things, it affords me a very great degree of pleasure to THINK of my fellow-subjects, behaving with piety, loyalty, and intrepidity. But I am ashamed, and confounded, to RE-FLECT on that PANIC and DISMAY which a people, though naturally brave, are subject to upon the least alarm, whilst they wallow in luxury, and think of NOTHING but EASE and SECURITY.

And

And if we examine our own hearts, shall we not find 'tis the love of AMUSEMENT, or of MONEY, which creates too great a security? National prejudices in our own favor, may also produce this effect: but let us not presume too far on the superiority of our naval force. Let us shew the enemy, if we are to call the FRENCH by this name, what STUFF we are made of, and what they have to EXPECT, if they should land.

I observed in the GAZETEER the other day, a striking representation of the magnanimous spirit of QUEEN ELIZABETH, who upon the occasion of the expected SPANISH ARMADA, and of people forsaking their houses, said, "But I SWEAR UNTO YOU, by
 "GOD, if I knew those persons,
 "or any who shall do so here-
 "after,

“after, I will make them know and
 “feel what it is to be fearful in so
 “urgent a cause.”

And what would his Majesty, whose personal bravery, as well as parental care of his subjects, are exceeded by no prince upon earth, say of those, who should FLY from his capital, or stand quietly to receive the conqueror? “D— ’em, let “’em come,” said a gallant officer the other day, “I wish they would “put it to that ISSUE.” But HE thought of fighting only on the water; and indeed if one vigorous BRUSH could bring the whole affair to an issue, it might be happy for us. But in this case also, we must become more virtuous, before we flatter ourselves, that ALL all the gifts of heaven are reserved for us.

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It is more easy to BEGIN a war, than to END it, and unless we exert our courage and steadiness in our private capacities, and support it with good policy, that is, with a due regard to the necessity of a heavy expence, and consequently to the means of raising supplies, our pride may be humbled in a far greater degree, than a LIBERAL contribution to the exigencies of the state, can affect us. If the present occasion is of so very critical a nature, to this nation, as my mind suggests to me it is, we must exert our virtue in every shape; we must think SERIOUSLY, and prepare to avoid fear, even when DANGER is near, and not talk big, because we think it is at a great distance.

I invite no man to take the advantage of the honest serjeant who is to be my MASTER ; but, as fine gentlemen learn to FENCE, in time of peace, which can answer no purpose but to kill their fellow-subject ; or, perhaps, their friend ; I will learn how to destroy an enemy, who would kill or distress ME or my FRIEND. There can be no harm in it : it ought to be esteemed a diversion, in time of war. But if this humor appears absurd TO-DAY, it may have a very different appearance TO-MORROW.

We see the state wisely provides by land as well as by sea, And though a militia has not been hitherto thought necessary ; yet men of all ranks, READY to bear arms, and fit for soldiers, may be of the

greatest consequence. Because we are ISLANDERS, and no uninvited invader has met with success since WILLIAM the conqueror, it does not follow that we are IMPREGNABLE. At what period of time was this nation exactly in the same circumstances as the present, with respect to so powerful a nation as the FRENCH? The business, now, is of no less importance than the SAFETY AND PRESERVATION OF OUR COUNTRY? We know what we do ENJOY, and what we may SUFFER! Can we die in so glorious a cause as in defending our country? If we ought to hazard our own lives to save that of ONE fellow-creature, how much more ought we in gratitude to exert ourselves to preserve the LIVES and properties of MILLIONS, whose ancestors have often bled for us?

Let

Let us bring it HOME at once, and think how we are to BEHAVE, not as QUAKERS, but as MEN, who esteem self-preservation the first law; PRESERVATION of body as well as soul. Let us behave as those christians of PURER AGES THAN THIS, who fought well, because the laws of society rendered it their duty to fight well, even for HEATHENS. They RECEIVED HIRE for fighting: let you and I be glad to PAY it; and if we can, let us do more. It may be necessary not only for christians to fight for christians, and for true christianity; but the father for his children; the husband for his wife; and every man for his COMMON PARENT. Those christians of early days, indeed, had heaven in their view, and therefore were not afraid to DIE. Let not the philosopher

sopher and divine, shudder at death, when the soldier is READY to bleed for his country; and if any of these happen to be NO christians, yet they act like men and BRITONS; and are resolved to PERISH, rather than receive the law.

Thus if the enemy is HARDY enough to make the tryal; and by the favor of darkness, or the winds, or by means which we have not ships enough to prevent, do REALLY set their feet on this ISLAND; we may, by the kind of READINESS which I am recommending, suffer none of the common affairs of life to be interrupted; only we must consider that the first object is to assist the state, which, we may plainly perceive, has our preservation entirely at heart, in such manner as shall

shall be most effectual, without any fear or jealousy. Thus will nothing but the arm of OMNIPOTENCE render any enterprize against us successful, or prevent the enemy falling into the snare they designed for us.

I FIND that Lord —, and your neighbors in KENT, already prepare men, who will be ready to assist in repulsing the enemy, if the occasion requires it of them. I like the humor of your tenants and servants, in desiring cockades, though it will not be proper they should wear them, except when they exercise in your garden.

If there is a CALL for such soldiers as you and I, let us be ready, in whatever part of the ISLAND we
may

may happen to be ; but particularly in these cities. Your loyalty, your love for your country, your tenderness for your wife and children, and your affection to their future welfare, are the strongest securities that you will act the part of an honest and brave man. I am persuaded you will not desert the noblest cause which ever warmed your generous heart.

I am glad you are so ready to send recruits to the army, at the first approach of danger. You are to drive your cattle from the sea-coast ; but do not seem inclined to be driven thence yourself ; I dare say the king's troops will support you. I do not hear that we are called upon for any recruits in the city ; but the alarms of a great embarkation

kation at any of the FRENCH ports, much more of their actual landing in ours, must render it no unpleasing circumstance to his Majesty and his ministers, to receive from private persons a long list of volunteers armed and accoutered, though it were to fight only within ten miles of the capital. But, in any case, let it be infamous to behave dastardly on so INTERESTING an occasion.

No man wishes with a warmer zeal than myself, that our brave admirals, captains, and mariners, may do the whole business that is to be done; but what they CANNOT do, must be executed by the CONDUCT and INTREPIDITY of the ARMY; therefore we must be ready to recruit it. But we ought, at

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the same time, to possess ourselves most stedfastly of this perswasion, that even private persons cannot perform a nobler and more virtuous action, than, with their latest breath, to D E F E N D their country !

If any of these hints, which are thrown out in this unmethodical manner, can, in your opinion, be of the least use, my intentions are so upright, and my wishes for the public welfare, so devout, I will print this letter for the service of whoever may benefit by it. And be assured that I am, with the utmost truth and sincerity,

DEAR SIR,

YOURS, &c.



